Regulatory Commissions (SERCs) have also been set up. One of the primary functions of these commissions is to rationalise tariff so that the power utilities earn an adequate profit. The government plays a catalytic role by encouraging the states to undergo reforms. A new plan scheme has been launched from 2000-2001 wherein financial assistance will be extended to those states which make a commitment to reforms. One of the latest initiatives of the government is to undertake complete metering of all consumers in a time bound manner by December, 2001 which would help in augmenting the revenues of the SEBs. Further, the Government, in its effort to promote reforms in the north eastern states, proposes to give financial assistance for setting up of a joint SERC for the region.

The above measures are expected to improve the financial viability of the power utilities/SEBs, which in turn, would enthuse the private sector to invest in the power sector.

Exemption of Power Equipments from Custom Duty

3480. DR. Y. LAKSHMI PRASAD: Will the Minister of POWER be pleased to state:

(a) whether the State Government of Andhra Pradesh has requested for total exemption from custom duty for power equipment of all categories of power projects; and

(b) if so, the steps taken on their request?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF POWER (SHRIMATI JAYAWANTI MEHTA): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Question does not arise.

National Fuel Policy

3481. SHRI R.S. GAVAI: Will the Minister of POWER be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have proposed to set up a Committee for formulating a National Fuel Policy for the power sector;

(b) if so, the details theeof alongwith the reasons therefor; and

(c) the steps proposed by Goverment for ensuring adequate and timely fuel supply of appropriate quality to the power plants?